

may be a substantial factor in the settlement of small claims, but normally will not carry great weight in the settlement of large claims. In determining whether the cost of collection justifies enforced collection of the full amount, EPA may consider the positive effect that enforced collection of the claim may have on the collection of other similar claims.

(d) Statutory penalties, forfeitures or debts established as an aid to enforcement and to compel compliance may be compromised where the Administrator determines that the Agency's enforcement policy, in terms of deterrence and securing compliance (both present and future), will be adequately served by accepting the offer.

§ 13.26 Payment of compromised claims.

The Administrator normally will not approve a debtor's request to pay a compromised claim in installments. However, where the Administrator determines that payment of a compromise by installments is necessary to effect collection, a debtor's request to pay in installments may be approved. Normally, where installment repayment is approved, the debtor will be required to execute a confess-judgment agreement which accelerates payment of the balance due upon default.

§ 13.27 Joint and several liability.

When two or more debtors are jointly and severally liable, collection action will not be withheld against one debtor until the other or others pay their proportionate share. The amount of a compromise with one debtor is not precedent in determining compromises from other debtors who have been determined to be jointly and severally liable on the claim.

§ 13.28 Execution of releases.

Upon receipt of full payment of a claim or the amount compromised, EPA will prepare and execute a release on behalf of the United States. The release will include a provision which voids the release if it was procured by fraud, misrepresentation, a false claim or by mutual mistake of fact.

Subpart E—Suspension of Collection Action

§ 13.29 Suspension—general.

The Administrator may suspend the Agency's collection actions on a debt where the outstanding debt principal does not exceed \$20,000, the Government cannot presently collect or enforce collection of any significant sum from the debtor, the prospects of future collection justify retention of the debt for periodic review and there is no risk of expiration of the statute of limitations during the period of suspension. Additionally, the Administrator may waive the assessment of interest, penalty charges and administrative costs during the period of the suspension. Suspension will be for an established time period and generally will be reviewed at least every six months to ensure the continued propriety of the suspension. DOJ approval is required to suspend debts exceeding \$20,000. Unless otherwise provided by DOJ delegations or procedures, the Administrator refers requests for suspension of debts of \$20,000 to \$100,000 to the United States Attorney in whose district the debtor resides. Debts exceeding \$100,000 are referred to the Commercial Litigation Branch, Civil Division, Department of Justice, for approval.

§ 13.30 Standards for suspension.

(a) *Inability to locate debtor.* The Administrator may suspend collection on a debt where he determines that the debtor cannot be located presently but that there is a reasonable belief that the debtor can be located in the future.

(b) *Financial condition of debtor.* The Administrator may suspend collection action on a claim when the debtor owns no substantial equity in real or personal property and is unable to make payment on the claim or effect a compromise but the debtor's future financial prospects justify retention of the claim for periodic review, provided that:

(1) The applicable statute of limitations will not expire during the period of the suspension, can be tolled or has started running anew;

(2) Future collection can be effected by offset, notwithstanding the 10-year